

On February 26, 2008, when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger created the cabinet level position of secretary of service and volunteering, he took a truly transformative step in the model of civic engagement. This first-in-the-nation action is indicative of the Governor and First Lady Maria Shriver's understanding that we meet our challenges not as isolated individuals, but as members of a true community with all of us working together. Government alone is not enough to address all the critical needs of our society. Individuals volunteering together as a collective force are necessary to impact issues like disaster response, education, environment and poverty. And, in California, that collective volunteer force is getting the backing – or the muscle – it needs to really take civic engagement to the next level. They will be plugged in at the highest echelons of California's government – they'll be at the Governor's table – to make sure that the ideals and agenda of volunteers are heard and their heart to serve is fully utilized and exponentially maximized. Points of Light & Hands on Network has a longstanding partnership with CaliforniaVolunteers, so I know this state's 6.47 million volunteers are poised to swell to an even greater number and create even more positive change in their communities. From Oakland to Riverside, Californian volunteers will be the change they want to see in the world.

Michelle Nunn
President and CEO
Points of Light & Hands On Network